1: Nachtigall SC15 Paez SC15

631

/General information on the region of Tierradentro will be found in category 101./

/286 cont./

291 the waist, and over it a rebozo or shawl of foreign make; they
wear hats of masculine manufacture. They carry a thin stick
283 one meter long more or less, called kasguat, held under the
left armpit, and at its upper end there is a bundle of wool to
be spun, a task which they do at any time, while walking or
sitting in the house, regardless of whether a child is resting on
their backs or, when they are walking along the road, a heavy
301 load. Only the women wear ornaments consisting of multi-
colored necklaces, earrings, and sometimes rings.

293 Both men and women usually carry three woolen pouches,
415 aside from others of fique, a very small one for money, a
larger one for mambe /coca and lime for chewing/, and the
third, which is the largest of all and holds the other two, is
used to carry palm leaves or the plaited work made with them
for the men, and other things for the women.

276 Coca.--All the Paez are "mambe chewers," men, women,
[461] and children, regarding coca as an article that gives strength,
[261] frees one from laziness, and mitigates hunger. Without it, of
[273] course, they will not work. Coca and chicha, fermented sugar-
[262] cane juice, play the role of real foods, given their starchy and
scant diet.

●631 Parcialidades and cabildos.--Politically, the Indians are
621 organized into parcialidades, each headed by a cabildo made
up of a gobernador and substitute, a major alcalde and another
minor one, two alguaciles, three fiscales, a comisario, a
capitán, and a síndico elected each year and put in office by
the respective alcaldías of the municipio, except for the last
two, who are named for life and put in office by the /287/
Church. Their functions are administrative and police work,
but in reality they exercise functions of social, legal, and re-
ligious control.

631 The parcialidades are bounded by the craggy peaks and the
deep, rugged beds of the streams and rivers in such a way that
each one circumscribes specific kinds of geography, and even of

/287 cont./

63/ climate and vegetation. Although Paez culture is certainly unitary, each parcialidad presents different nuances which are evident even in the mythology and language. The antropomimia is quite different in each parcialidad.

Nowadays there are 16 parcialidades, four of which belong to the municipio of Inzá and the remaining 12 to that of Páez (Belalcázar).

771/782 Magic and medicine.--There are three institutions which go in unison and encroach upon others, which explain the causation of sicknesses, the treatment for them, and serve as escape valves for aggression. They are:

a) The one made up of the trilogy of supernatural beings named Duende /ghost/, Echi, and Arco /rainbow/;

b) The institution of the medicine man, and

c) Sorcery.

753/776/[75]/[787] a) Duende, Arco, and Echi are the causers of illnesses, each of them producing a specific symptomatology which serves as the basis for the diagnostics of common people, a diagnostics corroborated by the divining activities of the medicine man. These supernatural beings cause illnesses by puncture, aroused by the annoyance that they suffer because of the sorcerers' practices, or by those who had contact with corpses and did not go through the mandatory purification, or because people have passed through places that are taboo, such as bogs and lagoons, or have failed to comply with the rites and ceremonies when slaughtering cattle or when harvesting new clearings, or because they have not observed "custom" at the first menstruation or childbirth.

756/787 b) In the institution of the medicine man the functions of divination, magic, and medicine are entwined. More precisely, the medicine man is a diviner-shaman-curer who has undergone an /288/ apprenticeship in the profession with an esteemed and experienced master or with the help of a guardian spirit seen in actuality or in dreams; the latter are the best

medicine men.

/288 cont./
583 in the church, live together for a period of indeterminate duration, explaining that /289/ the man does not have enough money at hand to marry as soon as he asks the woman, and it is necessary to work in order to obtain it.

771 Religion.--The religion of the Paez is formally Catholicism,
177 but many of their traditions are hidden in it. The principal
[796] fiestas of the natives are religious ones, which acquire true strokes of splendor. The Catholic priest is called upon for the ceremonies of baptism, marriage, and cases of death.

## Chapter II

631 Calderas.--Incrusted in the very heart of Tierradentro is the
131 Parcialidad of Calderas, bounded on the north by a high ridge
133 that separates it from Chinas and Avirama; on the east, La Muralla, the very model of a fault, separates it from Avirama, just as a ridge separates it from Togoima; to the south, deep gorges and high peaks separate it from San Andrés and Togoima; to the west, the Quebrada Guacharaca divides it from the Parcialidad of Lame.

133 It is crossed from west to east by the Quebrada Kukiyú,
631 actually a river in terms of the volume and violence of its
[423] waters, whose bed is deep, enclosed, and inaccessible. Its left bank is somewhat softened by a beautiful plateau of about 20 hectares, with fertile lands, abundant waters, and on which the pueblo rises; it belongs to the community, whereas the other lands are private property guaranteed by the fact that the owner either personally cleared the montaña or inherited it from his ancestors who cleared the forest. The right bank is steep, harsh,
[161] rugged. Numerous clearings are to be seen on these sloping
[311] lands, indicating the increase in population that compels them to cultivate lands of low fertility and great danger for the laborer.

4:Bernal Villa--1 E-5 (1952-1953) 1953 SC15 Paez SC15

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# I

## Point of Departure

631 To the north of the municipio of Inzá and to the west of
361 the confluence of the Ullucos and Páez rivers, two hours on horseback from the points just mentioned, the corregimiento /district governed by a corregidor/ of San Andrés is found on the left bank of the Pisimbalá torrent, an affluent of the
175 Ullucos. Its name has been registered in the parochial books
103 since 1736, when the priest José Fernández Belalcázar, as the
797 representative of the Bishop of Popayán, initiated in San Andrés de Pisimbalá pastoral visits to the Paez pueblos.

361 San Andrés de Pisimbalá is a pueblo with the same characteristics that we have noted in other Paez centers; that is to say, it consists of a church, a school, the rectory, the house of the cabildo, and some others used solely for the celebration of religious fiestas. It is located on a small plateau, a ledge hanging on the declivity.

563 At the present time it is inhabited by whites and mestizos
177 whose ways of life, norms of behavior, and labor practices
361 have been imposed on the natives. Resistance to contact has
648 been overcome, but active resentment against the white still
566 crops out among the old people. Almost completely acculturated, many of them have sunk to the state of tenant farmers. The phenomenon of the colonization of Indians and land is the same everywhere. The Indian loses his land and sinks into servitude.

In 1926 the Municipal Council of Inzá created a settlement area with clearly delineated boundaries in a common agreement /178/ between the municipal authorities and the cabildo. The colonists established themselves in that area. The valley of the Pisimbalá torrent is narrow, but extremely fertile. It belongs in its entirety to a few families of colonists,

7:Hernández de Alba E-5,7(no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
Pasto SC17



in which a Spaniard held a territory occupied by Indians. The natives, under a chief who was protected by the White authorities and who made contact between the master, or encomendero, and his subjects, had to give a certain number of days' work and a specified tribute in products of the lands, animals, gold, or manufactures. The encomiendas made no effort to Hispanicize the Indians, but continued to loot and massacre them. The Indians, reduced to utter misery, gave up all their artistic and industrial activities, and devoted the greater part of their time to the service of the master or to seeking products to pay the obligatory tribute. To remedy this situation, the Spanish Crown decreed the native "parcialidad," giving surviving groups reservations and prohibiting their employment in transporting men and goods over the highways. This reform was never entirely carried out, however, and the Indians, in spite of having their own government, the cabildo or Indian council, continued in servitude or debt slavery.

The native Indian government consisted generally of a governor, a first mayor (alcalde mayor), a second mayor (alcalde segundo), a trustee (síndico or fiscal), and constables (alguaciles), the last a kind of police who transmitted to the people the orders which the Whites gave through the governors or mayors, and who carried out penalties of imprisonment, of placing in stocks, and whipping, which the first Spaniards introduced into the punishment of the natives. At the same time, the Christianization of the Indians began. It succeeded in an imperfect way, however, for the Indian attended Masses, arranged and participated in processions, and did not miss the solemn ceremonies a single Sunday largely because on the same day he brought his own products to the pueblo for sale, bought salt or meat which he needed, and devoted himself to drinking chicha, the traditional drink which he had always taken on religious or social occasions.

The Indians of Nariño, descendants of the *Pasto*, lost their language and many of their customs during the Colonial Period, although they continued to live as natives on their reservations, which daily became smaller because of the encroachments by the neighboring Whites or Mestizos. They became farmers with small landholdings and, occasionally, masons in the cities. The *Moguex* and *Páez*, however, retained their language and the greater part of their customs. Some of them, especially the men who had to deal with the Whites, learned a little Spanish, and they continued throughout the Colonial Period to defend their lands and their traditions. To religious practices introduced by the missionaries, they added such elements as the offer of food to the souls of the dead. They added to the Colonial council (cabildo) the office of captain, an official who, unlike the rest of the council, was not responsible to civilian authorities but had life tenure, sometimes a hereditary position, and more authority within the group.

7:Hernández de Alba E-5 (no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex



civilized tradesman, the Indian turns to drinking guarapo or chicha and becomes drunk. Often a heated discussion, always spoken in Spanish and not in *Páez*, leads to insults and perhaps to blows and injuries. A man's wife usually maneuvers him from the village and, if he falls asleep on the road, she sits by him warding off dangers.

## SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

**Political structure.**—The *Moguex*, *Páez*, *Guanaca*, *Timaná*, and *Yalcón*, despite their great similarity in language and culture, formed separate groups at the time of the Conquest. Each was divided into several communities (parcialidades), of which those of the *Páez* were the most numerous. The *Guanaca* were split between two principal caciques, one of whom, Anabeima, joined the Spaniards against the *Páez* of Avirama. The other cacique was Esmisa, Anabeima's brother-in-law. Each *Páez* community had its own chief, but the communities were grouped into three great divisions. One consisted of the *Páez*, *Tálaga*, *Simurga*, and *Taravira*, on the shores of the Páez River. The chiefs of three of these groups were brothers; that of the fourth was their sister, whose name was Taravira. Another group was headed by Suin, and his son, Esmisa. In the third group, Avirama was joined by other neighboring chiefs of less importance.

Each community (cacicado) consisted of several polygynous families under a male chief (pl. 185, *top, left*). Each family had its own house located some distance from its neighbor's. All the members of a community gathered for general work, and all or several of the communities united for war, either against the *Pijao*, their feared neighbors, or against the Spaniards.

The place of a cacique's residence was a sort of focal point and meeting place, and today most of such places are Indian villages with the same names, such as Suin, Tálaga, Avirama, Togoima (formerly Toboima), etc. The present *Páez* Indian reservation of Tierradentro is divided politically into two municipios—Páez or Belalcázar and Inzá—with 22 communities, each governed by its own councils (cabildos, of Colonial origin) and by the municipal authorities. The cabildo is elected annually. The Indians, however, are jealous defenders of their traditions, and insist on a captain and síndico, each with life tenure, to act as their own leaders and as true representatives of the cacique. Their duties are moral and fiscal and carry a certain divine authority, as they are inaugurated in the local church. The cabildo, on the other hand, has only administrative and police powers; it divides the land, orders work to be done, and executes the municipal orders. The members of a cabildo hold office for 1 year and receive no remuneration. They are elected on the first of December by all the male adults, or "macaneros," that is, the Indians who participate in the communal work according to a

7:Hernández de Alba F-6/(no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex



631 666 [651] list presented by a council composed of former governors, the captain, and the síndico. The meeting may object to the list, but generally accepts it. On the following January 1, the cabildo-elect must appear at the office of the municipal mayor to receive the staffs, their insignia of office, and to assume their duties and responsibilities. The offices are: Governor and alternate, commissioner, two mayors (alcaldes), two constables (alguaciles), and three prosecutors (fiscales), one of whom is a young man assigned to learn the ways of government. The mayors, constables, and prosecutors are something like bosses or policemen, and execute orders issued by the Governor or by the captain or the municipal authorities to a community through the Governor.

423 [651] [554] **Property.**—The Indians today do not own any real property in the usual sense. The land assigned to an entire community is allotted to each adult for his use when he becomes a macanero, that is, capable of giving one day's work each year for the collective planting for the benefit of the saint and as many days as may be required by the cabildo for the repair of roads, bridges, etc., or for work in the village. The right to the use of the land may pass to the heirs, wife and children, in the absence of which it reverts to the community or the cabildo.

422 [764] [428] [177] [692] [623] [681] The house was formerly typical personal or movable property, which could be easily abandoned, dismantled, or destroyed. The same holds today for fragile cane dwellings. There are few houses so solidly built that they constitute real or immovable property. Other personal property, such as utensils, clothes, weapons, adornments, and jewels, was formerly buried with the owner. These things and livestock, planted fields, and crops are now inherited by the members of the deceased's family. In general, Colombian law is being implanted by the judges and municipal mayors, although the cabildo judges some minor offenses and punishes the offenders by whipping, imprisonment, or stocks (cepo), a form of torment retained from Colonial times.

691 648 [423] Although the Indians' communities have in most cases titles of limits of their lands dating from Colonial times, there are still litigations on boundaries. An interesting case is the struggle of the Indians to dislodge a settlement of Negroes from the old salt works in Ambostá, where they were abandoned many years ago by a rich Popayán family who took them there to work the mines. The female Indian chief (cacica) of this territory allowed the Negroes to live on a hill, called "the hill of the fifteen Negroes." The Negroes are not organized under a cabildo, but have a chief who represents them. They all contribute to a special religious feast in the municipio, and provide means to continue the suit for the possession of the hill against the Indians.

Hernández de Alba E-5,4 (no date) 1946 SC15 Paez SC15
Moguex



Castillo mentions that they wor-
shiped the sun, in whose honor they met and danced in places called "Itaqui-finó," i. e., the place where the sun revealed its mysteries; and that they venerated a kind of culture hero called Guequiau. It was he who instructed shamans (mohanes).

This hero has a counterpart in the religious legend of Juan Tama, the Son of the Star. One day when the Morning Star shone very brightly, some Indians found a child in a gorge—ever since called the Gorge of the Star. This was Juan Tama. They picked him up and entrusted him to a woman to nurse, but he nursed so much that her milk dried up. He was given to another woman, whom he also made very weak. They then said that he could not be nursed by a woman, and gave him food. After he grew up, he married the female chief of Huila, Doña María Mendiguagua, and became chief of all the Indians. He instructed people and explained to them how to keep the land for themselves and not mix with White people. He pronounced them invincible and summoned a chief from Pitayó, called Calambás, whom he appointed his manager. Calambás rebelled,[12] but was defeated by Juan Tama, who pardoned him on account of his bravery, and conferred on him and his heirs the right to rule the *Pdez* in Bitoncó. As death approached, Juan Tama went to the lake on the páramo of Moras and sank into the waters. He had come out of this place and returned to it, leaving no heirs.[13]

In the neighborhood of Bitoncó there is a rock with what appears to be human footprints. When the Indians pass it, they uncover their heads and say, "The Holy One came this way." Another remnant of the cult of Juan Tama is the custom that each member of the council spends one week at the shores of the lake before the end of his term to render an account to Juan Tama of his actions in office. Likewise, newly elected officers, as soon as they receive their staffs or insignia of authority, spend a week at the lake. They toss silver coins into it, wash their staffs, and pray for strength to rule well. This ceremony, performed with the greatest secrecy, is called the "curing of the staffs." Recently, however, the Indians have stopped "curing" their staffs in the lake, for they say that Juan Tama is angry, and whenever they approach the lake, it rains and storms badly.

In the Guanacas section there was another sacred lagoon, called Tumbachí, which was recently drained because a snake that lived there attracted girls and kept them for a whole year, and then returned them when they were about to become mothers.

These tribes believed that the soul comes back to life.

Witchcraft was strongly developed among these Indians, who still believe in most of its practices, in spite of the catechization forced upon them by the missionaries.

[12] During the War of Independence, as well as in subsequent revolutions, the Indians of the family named Calambás distinguished themselves as warriors.

[13] We are indebted to Father David González for this legend, told to him by an old Indian in Lame.